



Kent Homechoice

www.kenthomechoice.org.uk

Issue 02

October 2008



Canterbury, Dover, Sevenoaks, Swale & Thanet

User Guide

YOUR HOME, YOUR CHOICE

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BACK COVER

General information

We can make information available:



In large print



On audio



In different languages

If you have any other requirements, please contact the council for the area that you are registered in.

Look on the website

- www.ashford.gov.uk
- www.canterbury.gov.uk
- www.dartford.gov.uk
- www.dover.gov.uk
- www.gravesham.gov.uk
- www.kenthomechoice.org.uk
- www.maidstone.gov.uk
- www.sevenoaks.gov.uk
- www.shepway.gov.uk
- www.swale.gov.uk
- www.thanet.gov.uk
- www.tmbc.gov.uk
- www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk

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POWERED BY



Welcome to the Kent Homechoice user guide

Kent Homechoice is the new choice based lettings scheme for all council and housing association homes in Kent.

Kent Homechoice gives you more choice about where you want to live. You will now have the chance to express an interest in vacant homes that are suitable for you.

Every fortnight Kent Homechoice will advertise all empty council and housing association homes that are available to let. Properties will be advertised on the internet and through a freesheet.

You can look at the adverts and bid for any homes you wish to be considered for. This guide provides a summary of who can bid and how to bid. You will need to be registered for housing with the council where the empty home is located.

Councils and housing associations in Kent Homechoice will generally only let empty properties to people who have made an expression of interest through Kent Homechoice. It also gives you a better idea of the properties available in your area. In each edition you can see how homes in the previous editions were let by turning to the feedback page. You can also view what level of priority the successful applicant had and how long they waited for a new home.

Everybody accepted onto a participating council's housing register can take part and bid for homes in the council's area. All homes that are advertised belong to either the council or a housing association. Each advert will confirm who is the landlord of the empty property.

Properties will be advertised on a two-weekly basis. You will be able to see basic details about each property available. There is more information about the advertisements in the adverts section.

We will provide feedback on previous properties that have been advertised so you will be able to see the band or points that the successful bidder for each property had.

You should be able to find all the information you need in this guide, but please contact us if you have any questions about Kent Homechoice. You can find our contact details in the contacts section of the scheme user guide.



Five steps to a new home

STEP 1 Membership

You are automatically a member of Kent Homechoice if you are accepted onto the housing register (including transfer list).

STEP 2 Registration

Once you have applied and been accepted onto the register you will be registered on the Kent Homechoice scheme and given a unique Homechoice number.

STEP 3 Bidding

You can see the available properties on the Kent Homechoice website, or in the two-weekly Kent Homechoice property freesheet. If you find a property that you would like, you can express an interest in it as long as you are eligible. This is known as placing a bid.

STEP 4 Offers

If your bid is top of the list, you will be offered the property, subject to eligibility checks, and invited to view. If the first applicant refuses the property it will be offered to the next suitable bidder.

STEP 5 Feedback

In every edition of the two-weekly Kent Homechoice freesheet and on the Kent Homechoice website, we will publish the results of previous bidding cycles. This will include how many people bid for each property, the band or points the successful bidder was in and their relevant date.

How Kent Homechoi

There are five steps for you to follow in order to choose your new home:

Step 1 – Membership

You are automatically a member of Kent Homechoice if you are registered on the council's housing register. If you are not registered for housing you can contact your council for an application form.

You can only bid for properties in the area that you are registered in.

If you need more information about whether you are eligible, please contact the Housing Options Team at your council.

Step 2 – Registration

Once your completed application has been assessed and you have been included on the housing register, we will write to you. Some of the councils operate a points scheme and others a banding scheme to assess priority. We will tell you what band/points you are in, the size of property you are eligible for and your unique Kent Homechoice number. You will also be sent a User Guide.

If there are any changes to your household, accommodation or personal circumstances you must contact the Housing Options Team at your council. You may have to complete another form and provide us with evidence. It is very important that we know any changes as it may alter your priority, or the type of property you are eligible for.

Step 3 – Bidding

You can express an interest in up to three properties (so long as you are eligible to be considered for them) in the fortnightly cycle. This is known as placing bids for properties. Homes are advertised in a freesheet called Kent Homechoice and on the website www.kenthomechoice.org.uk.

There is more information about how to obtain the freesheet on pages 10 and 14. You will be able to bid from 9:00am Monday to 12 noon the following Monday. Your bids must reach us by Monday at 12 noon to be considered. You can bid on the web from the previous Friday. The adverts give you information about each property available for letting and a photograph will be included if available.



Step 3 Bidding – Continued

You can bid in 5 ways:

1. On the internet

Go to www.kenthomechoice.org.uk and log on with your unique Kent Homechoice number and your date of birth. Follow the instructions on screen.

2. By telephone

Call [0906 294 0020](tel:09062940020) and follow the instructions. See page 12 about bidding by telephone. Calls cost 25p/minute. Calls will normally take less than 1 minute.

3. By coupon

When you are first registered we will send blank coupons with your registration pack. Your coupons have your name and Kent Homechoice number printed on them. This number is unique to you so

no one else can use your coupons. See page 14 about how to complete your coupons. To request more coupons, simply tick the box on the coupon when you send it back or contact your council and ask for more coupons. They will be posted to you. It will be at the risk of the bidder to get the coupon posted in good time to arrive before bidding closes.

4. By text message

[07781 472 726](tel:07781472726) see page 13 about bidding by text.

5. In person at the council offices/Gateway:

You can find the office contact details of the partnership in the [contacts section](#) of the scheme user guide.

Step 4 – Offer

At the end of the bidding period, all bids for homes are put in priority order to produce a list of eligible applicants for each property.

The landlord of each property offers from the list after making further eligibility checks. Following these checks if your name is still at the top of the “priority list” you will be invited to view the property. If you refuse, the next person who is eligible on the list will be offered the home.

You may not automatically be penalised for refusing properties you have chosen. Your council will advise

you if any action will be taken because you have refused a property. Some landlords invite more than one applicant to view their properties at the same time, although the property is always offered first to the applicant with the highest priority.

If you are top of more than one list, the landlord will decide which property to offer you after contacting you and the other properties will be offered elsewhere. If you receive an offer to view but you do not wish to, or are unable to attend you must contact the landlord immediately.

Step 5 – Feedback

It is not possible to notify you individually when your bids have been unsuccessful but you can get this information from the website (see ‘bidding history’ after you have logged in), or see the Kent Homechoice freesheet.

All properties that have been advertised will be listed on the feedback page of the freesheet once they have been let. This tells you how many people bid for each property as well as the points/band of the successful bidder.

Assessing your housing need

Kent Homechoice's aim is to try and house those in the greatest housing need. Each Local Authority has its own housing lettings policy, which will cover lettings in their area.

All of the Councils in the scheme have a way of prioritising those in the greatest housing need. Some Councils use a bands system and some award points. See the contacts page for details of how to obtain a full summary of the lettings policy covering your area.

The general principles of each type of system are summarised below:

Bands Systems:

Every application is placed into a band including all homeseekers, and transfers which helps to identify who most needs housing. The band that you will be placed in will be decided by a number of factors listed in each local authority lettings policy.

Applicants with the highest housing need will be placed into the highest band. Applicants with a lower housing need will be placed in the lower bands.

Within each band the length of time you have waited will be taken into account. You can only improve your position with time and people who are assessed after you will not be placed above you within a band.

Points Schemes:

Every application including homeseekers and transfers will be awarded points which helps to identify who most needs housing.

The amount of points that you are given will be decided by a number of factors listed in each Council Lettings Policy. Applicants with the greatest housing need will be given the highest number of points.

All partners within the scheme have a limited amount of social housing compared to the demand for housing in the area. In view of this only those with the highest levels of housing need are likely to be successful via the Kent Homechoice system. Further information about alternative housing options is provided in the Housing options and Home Buy sections.



Contact Details

Canterbury City Council

www.canterbury.gov.uk/assets/housing/hnrinformationbooklet2007.pdf

Contact Details:

Housing Options Team
Canterbury City Council, Military Road,
Canterbury CT1 1YW

Phone 01227 862142

Email community.services@canterbury.gov.uk

Office open from:

Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm

Telephone:

Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm

Dover District Council

www.dover.gov.uk/housing/gettingahome.asp

Contact Details:

Housing Needs Section
Dover District Council
White Cliffs Business Park
Dover
CT16 3PJ

Phone: 01304 872265

Telephone Mon- Friday 9am-5pm

Email: housing@dover.gov.uk

Officers available at DDC@your service Area Office, 69 Castle Street Dover CT16 1PD:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday:

9.00am – 4.00pm

Wednesday: 9.00am – 12.30pm

And at Whitfield main office:

Wednesday 12.30pm – 4.00pm

Sevenoaks District Council

Housing Management Function contracted out to West Kent Housing Association

<http://www.westkent.org/article.asp?id=93&realcat=286>

Contact Details:

Housing Options Team
West Kent Housing Association
101 London Road,
Sevenoaks,
Kent TN13 1AX

Phone: 01732 749433 / 01732 749000

Web: www.westkent.org

Email: housing.options@wkha.org.uk

Office open from:

Monday to Thursday 8:45am – 5:15pm,
Friday 8:45am – 4:45pm



Swale Borough Council

www.swale.gov.uk/media/adobepdf/i%2F3%2FApplying_for_Housing_Booklet.pdf

Contact Details:

Housing Register Team
Swale Borough Council,
Swale House,
East Street,
Sittingbourne,
Kent ME10 3HT

Phone: 01795 417622

Email: housingregister@swale.gov.uk

Office open from:

Monday to Friday 9am to 12pm
and 1pm to 4pm

Telephone:

Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm
Friday 9am to 4.30pm

Thanet District Council

www.thanet.gov.uk/housing/council_housing/apply_for_council_housing.aspx

Contact Details:

Housing Options Team
Cecil Street, Margate, Kent CT9 1XZ

Phone 01843 577277

Email housing@thanet.gov.uk

Office open from:

Monday to Wednesday 9.00am - 6.00pm,
Thursday 9.00am - 8.00pm,
Friday 9.00am - 6.00pm,
Saturday 9.00am - 5.00pm

Telephone:

Monday to Thursday 8.45am - 5.30pm,
Friday 8.45am - 5.00pm



Housing association partners

AmicusHorizon Group 60 Bell Road, Sittingbourne, ME10 4HE Phone: 01795 434 343 post@swale-housing.org.uk	Anchor Housing Association London and South East Regional Office, Milestone Place, 100 Bolton Road, Bradford, Yorkshire BD1 4DH Phone: 08457 758595 enquiries.housing@anchor.org.uk
Carr Gomm Area Office, 2 Roman Road, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8PZ Phone: 01795 590500 info@carrgomm.co.uk	The Co-operative Development Society Ltd (CDS) Marshalsea Road, London, SE1 1EP Phone: 020 7397 5700 enquiries@cds.coop
Downland HA (part of Affinity Sutton) Stoke House, Church Road, Ashford, TN23 1RD Phone: 0845 688 7717	Hanover Housing Association Hanover Service Centre, Nelson House, Alington Road, Eynesbury, St Neots, Cambridgeshire, PE19 6RE Phone: 01480 475069 hanoverservicecentre@hanover.org.uk
Home Group 3 Cantelupe Mews, Cantelupe Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 3BG Phone: 01342 301 750 home-eastgs@homegroup.org.uk	Housing 21 Leitrim House, West Wing, Little Preston, Aylesford ME20 7NS Phone: 0870 192 4000
Hyde Housing Association Ltd Suite 3, Orchard House, Orchard Street, Canterbury CT2 8AP. Phone: 01227 825200. canterbury.enquiries@hyde-housing.co.uk	Jewish Community HA Ltd Harmony Close, Princes Park Avenue, London, NW11 0JJ Phone: 020 8381 4901 lettings@jcha.org.uk
Moat 7th Floor North, Tubs Hill House, London Road, Sevenoaks TN12 1BL Phone: 0845 600 1006 customer@moat.co.uk	Orbit South Housing Association Foy House, 27-29 High Street, Margate CT9 1DL Phone to 0800 6781221 info@orbit.org.uk
Places for People 5 Invicta Business Centre, Monument Way, Orbital Business Park, Ashford, Kent, TN24 OHB Phone: 01233 500799	Riverside South East (English Churches Housing Group) PO Box 344, The Quays, Crown Quay Lane, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3JN Phone: 0845 155 9011 Dartford.admin@riverside.org.uk
Rockdale Housing Association Rockdale Lodge, Rockdale Road, Sevenoaks Kent TN13 1JT Phone: 01732 458762 www.rockdale.org.uk	Sanctuary Hereward South East Regional Office, Collier House, Mead Lane, Hertford, SG13 7UZ Phone: 0800 781 4755 southeast@sanctuary-housing.co.uk
Southern Housing Group Spire Court, Albion Way, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1JW Phone: 08456 120021 service.info@shgroup.org.uk	Town & Country Housing Group Monson House, Monson Way, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 1LQ Phone: 01892 514 614 info@tchg.org.uk

Where to get the Kent Homechoice freesheet or view on-line

Each Kent Homechoice freesheet is valid for one bidding period, running from **9.00am Monday to 12.00 noon the following Monday**. Remember you can bid on the web from the previous Friday. Make sure you bid from a Kent Homechoice freesheet that is in-date. The date will clearly be shown on the front of the freesheet. The Kent Homechoice freesheets are available from:

Canterbury City Council

Canterbury Housing Advice Centre	Second Floor, 24 Burgate, Canterbury, CT1 2HA Open Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm except Wednesday 10am to 1pm. Phone 01227 762605
Canterbury Library	Open Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm and Saturday 9am to 5pm. Phone 01227 463608
Canterbury Main Office	Military Road, Canterbury CT1 1YW Open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm. Phone 01227 862000
Herne Bay Divisional Office	William Street, Herne Bay CT6 5NX Open Monday to Friday 8.45am to 4.45pm. Phone 01227 363686
Herne Bay Library	124 High Street, Herne Bay CT6 5JY Open Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm and Saturday 9am to 5pm. Phone 01227 374896
Sturry Library	Chafy Crescent, Sturry, Canterbury, CT2 0BA Opening hours Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9am to 6pm, Saturday 10am to 2pm. Phone 01227 711479
Swalecliffe Library	78 Herne Bay Road, Swalecliffe, Whitstable CT5 2LX Opening hours Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9am to 6pm, Saturday 10am to 2pm. Phone 01227 792645
Whitstable Divisional Office	57 Harbour Street, Whitstable CT5 1AQ Open Monday to Friday 8.45am to 4.45pm. Phone 01227 771 918
Whitstable Library	31-33 Oxford Street, Whitstable CT5 1DB Open Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm. Saturday 9am to 5pm and Sunday 10am to 4pm Phone 01227 273309

Dover District Council

Aylesham Area Office	Boulevard Courriers, Aylesham CT3 3DT Open Monday 9:00am to 12:30pm and 1.30pm to 4.30pm Wednesday 9:00am to 12:30pm Phone: 01304 840100
Aylesham Library	Aylesham Community Centre, Ackholt Road, Aylesham CT3 3AJ Open Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:30am to 5:00pm Wednesday 9:30am to 1:00pm; Saturday 10:00am to 2:00pm Phone: 01304 841050
DDC@your service Area Office	69 Castle Street, Dover CT16 1PD Open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm Wednesday 9.00am to 12.30pm Phone: 01304 821199
Deal Area Office	Town Hall, High Street, Deal CT14 6BB Open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:00am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 4:30pm; Wednesday 9.00am to 12.30pm Phone: 01304 369582
Deal Centre for the Retired	3 Park Street, Deal CT14 6AG Open Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm Saturday 9.00am to 12.00pm Phone: 01304 372608
Deal Library	Broad Street, Deal CT14 6ER Open Monday to Friday 9.00am to 6.00pm; Saturday 9.00am to 5.00pm; Sunday 10.00am to 4.00pm Phone: 01304 374726
Dover District Council Main Office	White Cliffs Business Park, Dover CT16 3PJ Open Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm Phone 01304 821199
Dover Library	Dover Discovery Centre, Market Square, Dover CT16 1PH Open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9.00am to 6.00pm Wednesday 9.00am to 8.00pm; Saturday 9.00am to 5.00pm Phone: 01304 204241
Sandwich Area Office	The Guildhall, Sandwich CT13 9AH Open Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:00am to 12:30pm and 1.30pm to 4.30pm Phone: 01304 613305
Sandwich Library	13 Market Street, Sandwich CT13 9DA Open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:00am to 6:00pm Saturday 10:00am – 2:00pm Phone: 01304 613819
Triangles Community Centre	Poulton Close, Dover CT17 0HL Open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm Phone: 01304 219745

Sevenoaks District Council

Edenbridge Library	Church Street, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 5BD. Open Tuesday to Friday 9:00am – 6:00pm & Saturday 10:00am – 2:00pm. Phone: 01732 862600
The Forge Garage Stores & Post Office	The High Street, Penshurst, Kent TN11 8BU. Open Monday to Tuesday 6:30am – 5:30pm, Wednesday 6:30am – 1:00pm, Thursday to Friday 6:30am – 5:30pm, Saturday 6:30am – 1:00pm & Sunday 8:00am – 12:00pm. Phone: 01892 871108
Hartley Library	Ash Road, Hartley, Longfield, Kent DA3 8EL. Open Tuesday 9:00am – 5:00pm, Thursday 9:00am – 5:00pm, Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm & Saturday 10:00am – 2:00pm. Phone: 01474 704403
Leigh Post Office	Parkview, High Street, Leigh, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 8RL. Open Monday to Tuesday 9:00am – 1:00pm & 2:00pm – 5:30pm, Wednesday 9:00am – 1:00pm, Thursday to Friday 9:00am – 1:00pm & 2:00pm – 5:30pm & Saturday 9:00am – 12:30pm. Phone: 01732 832194
Sainsbury's Otford	Otford Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN14 5EG. Open Monday to Friday 6:30am – 10:30pm, Saturday 6:30am – 10:00pm & Sunday 10:00am – 4:00pm. Phone: 01732 742561
Sevenoaks District Council	Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HG. Open Monday to Friday 8:45am to 5:00pm except Friday when closes at 4:45pm. Phone: 01732 227000
Sevenoaks Library	Buckhurst Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent TN1 1LQ. Open Monday to Wednesday 9:00am – 6:00pm, Thursday 9:00am – 8:00pm, Friday 9:00am – 6:00pm & Saturday 9:00am – 5:00pm. Phone: 01732 453118
Swanley Library	London Road, Swanley, Kent BR8 7AE. Open Monday to Thursday 9:30am – 5:30pm, Friday 9:30am – 6:00pm & Saturday 9:00am – 4:00pm. Phone: 01322 662570
Tesco Riverhead	Aisher Way, Riverhead, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 2QS. Open Monday to Friday 24 hours, Saturday 00:01 – 10:00pm & Sunday 10:00am – 4:00pm. Phone: 0845 6779593
West Kent Housing Association	101 London Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1AX. Open Monday to Friday 8:45am to 5:15pm except Friday when closes at 4:45pm. Phone: 01732 749433
West Kent Housing Association	Swanley Office, Unit 38/39, Swanley Centre, Nightingale Way, Swanley BR8 7TQ. Open Monday to Friday 8:45am to 5:15pm except Friday when closes at 4:45pm. Phone: 01732 749400
West Kingsdown Library	Gamecock Meadow, London Road, West Kingsdown, Kent TN15 6EL. Open Tuesday 1:00pm – 7:00pm, Thursday 1:00pm – 5:30pm, Friday 9:00am – 1:30pm & Saturday 10:00am – 2:00pm. Phone: 01474 854623
Westerham Library	London Road, Westerham, Kent TN16 1BD. Open Tuesday 9:00am – 6:00pm, Wednesday 9:00am – 1:00pm, Thursday 9:00am – 5:00pm, Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm & Saturday 9:00am – 12:30pm. Phone: 01959 562326

Swale Borough Council

Citizens Advice Bureau - Faversham	43 Stone Street, Faversham, Kent ME13 8PH Mon, Wed and Fri - 10am - 2:30pm Phone: 0844 499 4125 (24/7)
Citizens Advice Bureau - Sheerness	Hope Street Centre, Hope Street, Sheerness, ME12 1QH Mon and Wed - 10am - 2pm Phone: 0844 499 4124 (24/7)
Citizens Advice Bureau - Sittingbourne	17 Station Street, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3DU Mon, Tue, Wed and Fri 10.00am - 12:30pm Phone: 0844 499 4124 (24/7)
Sittingbourne Library	Central Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 4AH Mon, Tue Wed Fri - 9.00am to 6.00pm Thur - 9.00am to 8.00pm Sat - 9.00am to 5.00pm Phone: (01795) 476545
Swale Borough Council – Faversham	Alexander Centre, Preston Street Faversham, Kent ME13 8NY Mon to Thur 9:00am - 5:00pm Fri 9:00am - 4:30pm Phone: (01795) 417622
Swale Borough Council - Sittingbourne	Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne Kent, ME10 3HT Mon to Thur 9:00am - 5:00pm Fri 9:00am - 4:30pm Phone: (01795) 417622
Swale Borough Council – Sheerness	Trinity Road, Sheerness, Kent ME12 2PG Mon to Thur 9:00am - 5:00pm Fri 9:00am - 4:30pm Phone: (01795) 417622
Swale Housing – Faversham	41 Stone Street, Faversham, Kent ME13 8PH Mon 8.00am – 6.00pm Tue, Thur and Fri 8.30am – 5.00pm Wed 8.30 am – 4.00pm except the first Wed of the month which is 8.30am - 3.30pm Phone: (01795) 434343
Swale Housing – Sheerness	1 Bank House, Broadway, Sheerness, Kent ME12 1TW Mon 8.00am – 6.00pm Tue, Thur and Fri 8.30am – 5.00pm Wed 8.30 am – 4.00pm except the first Wed of the month which is 8.30am - 3.30pm Phone: (01795) 434343
Swale Housing – Sittingbourne	5 Roman Square, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 4BJ Mon 8.00am – 6.00pm Tue, Thur and Fri 8.30am – 5.00pm Wed 8.30 am – 4.00pm except the first Wed of the month which is 8.30am - 3.30pm Phone: (01795) 434343

Thanet District Council

The Beacon	Manston Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT12 6NT Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm Phone 01843 855200
Birchington Library	Alpha Road, Birchington, Kent CT7 9EG Weekdays 9am - 6pm, closed all day Wednesday, Saturdays 10am - 2pm Phone 01843 841883
Broadstairs & St Peters Town Clerks Office	Pierremont Hall, Broadstairs, Kent CT 10 1JX Mondays to Fridays 9am - 2pm Phone 01843 868718
Citizens Advice Bureau	The Old Town Hall, Market Street, Margate CT9 1EU Monday to Friday 9.30-12.30 Phone 01843 225973 - Advice Line 01843 232666 - Appointments Line
Connexions	Paragon House, Albert Street, Ramsgate Monday to Friday 10am - 7pm Tues, Thurs & Fri 9am - 5pm, Wed 10am - 5pm Phone 01843 593395 (This is a young persons service)
Minster Library and Neighbourhood Centre	4a Monkton Road, Minster, Kent CT12 4EA Mondays 2pm - 6pm, Tuesday 9:30am - 1pm then 2pm - 6pm, Wednesday closed, Thursday 9:30am - 1pm then 2pm, Friday 9:30am - 6pm, Saturdays 9:30am - 1pm Phone 01843 8211442
Outpatients/A&E Department QEQM	St Peters Road, Margate, Kent CT9 4AN 24hrs hours a day, 7 days per week Phone 01843 225544
Ramsgate District Office	14 York Street, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 9DS Monday to Friday 8.45am - 12.30pm Phone 01843 577000
Thanet Gateway Plus	Cecil Square, Margate, Kent CT9 1XZ Weekdays 9am - 6pm, Thursdays till 8pm and Saturday 9am - 5pm Phone 01843 577000
Westgate Library	Minster Road, Westgate, Kent CT8 8BP Mondays 9am - 5pm, Tuesday 9am - 6pm, Wednesday 9am - 5pm, Thursday Closed, Friday 9am - 6pm, Saturdays 10am - 2pm Phone 01843 831017

Bidding

You can see the two-weekly Kent Homechoice freesheet on line at www.kenthomechoice.org.uk website, as well as bid online.

Free internet access is available at most of the the locations in the property outlets section. If you need help to find and use the website please ask at these locations.

Bidding via the website

Action	Example
1 To begin making your bids via the web go to	www.kenthomechoice.org.uk
2 You will need to Login to access the member pages so, at the homepage you will need to find the Login button.	Click on the Login button located at the top right of the screen.
3 At the Login page you will need to enter the following information:	Application Area: CANT Homechoice Number: 999999 Date of Birth: 16 Apr 1960
4 At the Members page you will need to:	Click on the Make a Bid link at the top of the four options available.
5 You will see a list of the properties that you are able to make a bid on:	Click the View Advert link on one of the entries in the list and the advert will open for you to look at. (There is also Bid link if you want to bid on the property from here).
6 When the advert is open:	You can click on the Bid link at the top of the advert to place a bid or you can close the advert if you do not.
7 When the bid is placed:	The property entry will move to your bids area above the property list. You can click the View Advert link if you want to remind yourself of the advert.
8 To place more bids, up to three in total:	You can repeat actions 5 , 6 and 7 until you have placed all of your bids. Now you can either log out or continue looking around the website.
9 If you want to change any of your bids placed in the bids area:	There is a Delete bid link if you want to remove the advert from you bids area and return it to the properties list.
10 If you have deleted a bid then you can enter more bids:	You will be able to add more bids to the bids area if you have deleted bids from your bid area you can add more bids, up to 3 in total

Bidding by telephone

Calls cost 25p per minute from a landline, and calls usually take less than one minute.
The cost of mobile calls varies according to the network you use.

Action	Example														
1 To begin making your bids dial	0906 294 0020														
2 You will hear	"Welcome to the Homechoice property line". Press 01 for Councils in Group One Press 02 for Councils in Group Two <table> <tr> <td>Councils in Group One</td><td>Councils in Group Two</td></tr> <tr> <td>Press 01 for Canterbury</td><td>Press 01 for TBA</td></tr> <tr> <td>Press 02 for Thanet</td><td>Press 02 for TBA</td></tr> <tr> <td>Press 03 for Ashford</td><td>Press 03 for TBA</td></tr> <tr> <td>Press 04 for Sevenoaks</td><td>Press 04 for TBA</td></tr> <tr> <td>Press 05 for Swale</td><td>Press 05 for TBA</td></tr> <tr> <td>Press 06 for Dover</td><td>Press 06 for TBA</td></tr> </table>	Councils in Group One	Councils in Group Two	Press 01 for Canterbury	Press 01 for TBA	Press 02 for Thanet	Press 02 for TBA	Press 03 for Ashford	Press 03 for TBA	Press 04 for Sevenoaks	Press 04 for TBA	Press 05 for Swale	Press 05 for TBA	Press 06 for Dover	Press 06 for TBA
Councils in Group One	Councils in Group Two														
Press 01 for Canterbury	Press 01 for TBA														
Press 02 for Thanet	Press 02 for TBA														
Press 03 for Ashford	Press 03 for TBA														
Press 04 for Sevenoaks	Press 04 for TBA														
Press 05 for Swale	Press 05 for TBA														
Press 06 for Dover	Press 06 for TBA														
3 You will hear	"Thank you. Please enter the number section of your reference number."														
4 You should now enter the numerical part of your Homechoice number only. Once you have entered the correct number you will hear	"Thank you. Please enter the day number of your birth date."														
5 You should now enter the day number of your date of birth. Please remember to put the leading zero (0) in if it is a single number. For example, if your date of birth is 16/04/1970 type in 16, if your date of birth is 08/01/1958 type in 08. Once you have entered the correct number, you will hear	"Thank you. Please enter the property reference number for your first bid."														
6 Enter the three digits of the property reference number. Once you have entered the correct number you will hear	"Thank you. If you would like to add an additional bid, press one, or press two to complete your bids."														
7 If you have pressed one you will hear	"Thank you. Please enter the property reference number for your second bid, or press the star key to complete your bidding."														
8 Enter the three digits of the second property reference number. Once you have entered the correct number you will hear	"Thank you. If you would like to add an additional bid, press one, or press two to complete your bids."														
9 If you have pressed one you will hear	"Thank you. Please enter the property reference number for your third bid, or press the star key to complete your bidding."														
10 You can make another bid if you decide to delete one but your total number of bids can not exceed 3.	"Thank you for bidding."														
If you made errors with your Homechoice number you may hear some of the instructions below:															
11 If you have made an error with your Homechoice number, you will hear	"I'm sorry, the reference number you have entered is not recognised. Please try again."														
12 Enter your Homechoice number again, making sure that you are only entering the number part of your reference number. If you get your Homechoice number wrong a second time you will hear	"I'm sorry, the reference number you have entered is not found. Please check with your council or housing association and call again."														

Bidding by text message

Most mobile phone companies will charge you around 10p to send an SMS text message.

Action	Example
1 To begin making your bids	Open a new text message
2 Enter in your Homechoice number via the keys	ABC12345
3 Then followed immediately by the hash mark	ABC12345#
4 You should now enter the advert reference number of your first bid followed immediately by the hash mark	ABC12345#654#
If you have finished bidding then send. If not, keep following the instructions below.	
5 You should now enter the advert reference number of your second bid followed immediately by the hash mark	ABC12345#654#791#
If you have finished bidding then send. If not, keep following the instructions below.	
6 You should now enter the advert reference number of your third bid followed immediately by the hash mark	ABC12345#654#791#555#
7 When you have entered all your bids, send or ok your text message bid	"Send or ok"
8 The number to send your bid to is	07781 472 726
- Most mobile phone companies charge SMS text messages at around 10p per text - To add numbers to the message keep pressing the keys until you get to the digit and select - On most mobile phones, to find the hash mark, first press the star key then select the hash mark - You can enter your bids in both upper and lower case. - Check your Homechoice number and bids are correct before sending.	
Ordering more bid coupons by text message. You can also order more coupons by sending a text message to the same text number but the message needs to be your Homechoice number, immediately followed by the hash mark and then the word 'coupon'	ABC12345#coupon



Bidding by coupon

- Your coupon has your name and Homechoice number printed on it – please check that these are correct.
- You can bid for up to three properties for each edition of the freesheet.
- Each property will have a three digit reference number, shown in the property advert in the Homechoice freesheet.
- For example, if you want to apply for properties with the reference numbers 654, 791 and 555, you should mark the coupon as shown.
- For the first bid (654 in this example), you should put an X in the first column against the relevant first digit of the number in the 'Bid 1' box (6 in this example).
- You should put an X in the second column against the relevant second digit of the number in the 'Bid 1' box (5 in this example).
- You should put an X in the third column against the relevant third digit of the number in the 'Bid 1' box (4 in this example).

- Do the same for your second and third bid as shown.
- Enter the date shown on the front of the Homechoice freesheet from which you are bidding.
- Please return your coupon by post. The address is already printed on the front of the coupon, but you will need to put a stamp on it.

Ordering more coupons

If you are running low on coupons, there are three ways for you to order more:

- tick the box on the back of the bidding coupon when you next bid.
- send a text (SMS) with your Homechoice number and the word 'coupon' to the text bidding number (**07781 472726**).
- log-in to the bidding section to order more coupons online.

Kent Homechoice Coupon

Enter freesheet date

D	D	M	M	Y	Y
---	---	---	---	---	---

Tick this box if you need more coupons sent to you ☐



Kent Homechoice

Bid 1				Bid 2				Bid 3			
1	☐	☐	☐	1	☐	☐	☒	1	☐	☐	☐
2	☐	☐	☐	2	☐	☐	☐	2	☐	☐	☐
3	☐	☐	☐	3	☐	☐	☐	3	☐	☐	☐
4	☐	☐	☒	4	☐	☐	☐	4	☐	☐	☐
5	☐	☒	☐	5	☐	☐	☐	5	☒	☒	☒
6	☒	☐	☐	6	☐	☐	☐	6	☐	☐	☐
7	☐	☐	☐	7	☒	☐	☐	7	☐	☐	☐
8	☐	☐	☐	8	☐	☐	☐	8	☐	☐	☐
9	☐	☐	☐	9	☐	☒	☐	9	☐	☐	☐
0	☐	☐	☐	0	☐	☐	☐	0	☐	☐	☐

Adverts

This is an example of an advert

one bedroom bungalow	H/T	1	1-1	G	AGE 60+	ref no: 882	
	Location: Suffolk Road, Spring Lane, Canterbury Landlord: Canterbury City Council Rent: £70.84 Service charge: £31.22 per week		Features: gas central heating, double glazing, step up to front door, lifeline, private rear garden. Close to row of local shops and regular mini-link bus service into city centre. Central Canterbury is a little over a mile away.				

Key to advert symbols



Number of bedrooms in the property



Number of people the property is suitable for



Property designed for people this age or above



Floor level of property, if flat or maisonette



Mobility Level 1 - Suitable for wheelchair user indoors and outdoors



Mobility Level 2 - Suitable for people who cannot manage steps or stairs and may use a wheelchair some of the day



Mobility Level 3 - Suitable for people only able to manage 1 or 2 steps or stairs



Pets allowed /
pets not
allowed



Families



Homeseeker/Transfer



Local Connection - Village



Transfer



Garden



Homeseeker



Lift / No Lift

Feedback

Understanding the feedback reports

In each of the Homechoice freesheets, there will be a feedback report. The feedback information contains lettings that have taken place since the previous edition.

Freesheet issue date

This is the publication date of the leaflet that the advert appeared in.

Advert reference

Combined with the leaflet issue date, this gives a unique identity to any advert appearing in the leaflet.

Size and property type

A simple description of the property advertised.

Location

Location of the property within Kent.

Bids

This is the total number of bids received for each property.

Letting Information

This will show the level of priority the successful bidder has.

Please note that Canterbury City and Thanet District Council do not have different application types.

This is an example of a feedback report

Freesheet Issue Date	Advert Reference	Size	Property Type	Location	Bids	LETTING INFORMATION		
						Band	Priority Date	Application Type
Thanet District Council								
25-Feb-08	123	3 Bed	House	Ramsden Square	125	B	02/06/07	Homeseecker
25-Feb-08	124	2 Bed	Flat	Brimley Road	19	A	23/05/07	Transfer
25-Feb-08	125	1 Bed	Flat (bedsit)	Cockerell Road	78	B	25/05/07	Homeseecker



Your housing options

Kent Homechoice is a different way of letting homes owned by councils or housing associations. It will not provide more homes but it will allow you to see what homes become empty and available for letting.

Most people will not get the opportunity to rent accommodation with a council or housing association. There are many more people looking for homes than homes that become empty and available for letting. Therefore, you may need to consider alternative solutions to your housing difficulties. Here are some alternative housing options you may wish to consider.

Private rented accommodation

Private rented accommodation can include lodgings, renting your own flat or house or shared accommodation. Living in private rented accommodation you will either be a tenant or a licensee.

Private renting offers you the freedom to find the type of home you require in the area that you wish to live. You may be eligible for help with the rent payments through housing benefit.

Contact your local council for more details.

If you decide to go ahead, you will need to get money together for a deposit and usually one month's rent in advance.

Contact your local council for further advice to see if they offer any assistance with a deposit.

Mutual exchange

Tenants of councils and housing associations may be able to swap their homes if they are secure or assured tenants. This is called mutual exchange. In mutual exchange, two or more tenants exchange their homes and take on the terms of each other's tenancy. If you are a tenant of a council or housing association please contact your landlord for further details.



HomeBuy options



HomeBuy is a government funded initiative to provide low cost, affordable homes for people to get their first foot on the property ladder.

If you are interested you should apply to Moat at www.homebuy.co.uk or call Moat on 07002 662846. In its role as HomeBuy Agent in Essex, Kent and Sussex, Moat works with other housing associations and local authorities to allocate HomeBuy to people in housing need.

Moat's teams have many years of experience in providing low cost, affordable homes. They will put you in touch with independent mortgage advisors and solicitors who will help you through every step of the way.

Who is eligible for HomeBuy?

HomeBuy is designed to help people, usually first time buyers, who cannot afford to buy a property that suits their household needs on the open market.

Social tenants who wish to buy a property through HomeBuy are given top priority. Key workers are also given priority.

We can also help people who have previously owned properties but are now unable to buy without assistance, for example in the case of relationship breakdowns, or families who are over-crowded in their existing homes.

You must have an annual gross income of at least £18,000 (joint or single income). The maximum income allowed is £60,000 per annum (single or joint). We will ask you to demonstrate that you cannot afford to buy a property to suit your household needs. You will need to have access to (or savings of) £3,500 to cover the initial costs of buying a home.

How do I apply for HomeBuy?

Before you apply, take some time to register on our website at www.homebuy.co.uk. Registration only takes a few minutes, and once you've registered you will be able to browse through details of properties that are available now or available soon.

If you wish to apply, the quickest way is through www.homebuy.co.uk. The application process takes around 20/25 minutes. Before you apply make sure you've got access to all the necessary information about your income, expenditure, loans, etc. Once you've submitted your application form, you'll receive an email to confirm that we've received it safely.

If you prefer, we can send you an application form. Call us on 07002 662846. We're open Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm. Application forms are also available from the reception areas of your Council office.

HomeBuy – the products

New Build HomeBuy

This shared ownership option offers brand new homes on a part buy/part rent basis. You purchase the share that you can afford, and pay a low rent to the housing association on the remainder. Shares between 25% and 75% are usually available. You can buy more shares in the property at a later stage if you wish to.

Rent to HomeBuy

This is a new government initiative (announced in September 2008) where you can rent a property at a discounted rent (set at approximately 80% of private market rents), with an expectation that you will convert the tenancy to New Build HomeBuy within a period of three years. This period will give you opportunity to save up for a deposit towards your mortgage.

Details of Rent to HomeBuy are still emerging but it is most likely that you will need to be eligible to purchase a property, ie, in full time permanent employment and with a good credit history.

As properties become available for Rent to HomeBuy, they will be promoted on www.homebuy.co.uk and information will be sent out to people who have registered for this product with the HomeBuy Agent.

Open Market HomeBuy – two options

- **MyChoiceHomeBuy** offers you a shared equity loan that can be used in conjunction with a conventional mortgage. A low monthly interest charge of 1.75% is payable on the equity loan. This rises in line with inflation each year. The home you choose to buy may be a “second-hand” street property, or a new build property. The amount you purchase depends on how much you can afford to buy but starts from 50% of the property.
- **Ownhome** is offered by Places for People in partnership with Cooperative Financial Services. It offers shared equity loans of between 20% to 40% of the purchase price to be used in conjunction with mortgages from the Co-operative Bank in the first instance.

First Time Buyers’ Initiative

This is offered by private developers on selected new homes developments. You will need to buy a minimum of 50% of the property, or more if you can afford to.

Resales

When existing shared owners wish to sell their properties, we offer these for sale to people who are on the HomeBuy register with Moat.

Social HomeBuy

This scheme allows existing housing association or local authority tenants to buy a share in the home they currently live in, on a shared ownership basis, with an element of discount to assist the purchase. In some cases it may help them to own their home outright. The landlord of the rented property must have opted to take part in the scheme. For Social HomeBuy please contact your own social landlord directly for more information and to find out if the Social HomeBuy option is available to you.



General information

Bid deadline

All bids for properties must reach the Locata offices by 12.00 noon (Monday) on the closing date shown on the front of the Kent Homechoice freesheet. If you are using coupons, make sure you allow enough time for the post to reach them.

Need help bidding?

You can ask a friend, family member or support worker to bid on your behalf. Please contact your local council if you need help bidding or advice about the process. Bids can be made on the internet at www.kenthomechoice.org.uk, by telephone, by coupon or in person at your council offices.

Subscribe to the Kent Homechoice freesheet

There are several places you can pick up a copy of the Kent Homechoice freesheet for free, explained in the property list outlets section. If you would like to receive a copy of the Kent Homechoice freesheet every two weeks posted directly to you, you can pay a subscription fee of £10.00 for six months. Please make cheques or postal orders payable to 'Locata (Housing services) Ltd' and send, together with your Homechoice number and mailing address to:

Kent Homechoice
PO Box 408
Ruislip
HA4 4EZ



The paper used to produce this freesheet is Wood Free, which means it's made from off-cuts/scrap from the paper mills and a mixture of wheat, rice, cotton, bananas and sugar cane. Below is a link to tell you more about it if you are interested.

www.rainforestinfo.org.au/good_wood/wfr_papr.htm